

Evening Telegraph

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1868.

The Payment of City Warrants.

YESTERDAY afternoon, in Common Council, Mr. Hetzell made an effort to secure the repeal of the obnoxious ordinance approved January 17, 1868, whose title facetiously declares that it is "to enforce the prompt payment of city warrants."

We have already commented at length on the oppressive operation of this ordinance, especially in connection with the teachers of our public schools, all of whom are now forced to go into the market and hawk about their promises of payment from the city, as, in the present state of our finances, it is impossible to secure the cashing of a warrant for the most insignificant sum within a period of five or six months from its date.

In urging the indefinite postponement of the bill to repeal the ordinance in question, Mr. Harper, who originated it and secured its passage, claimed that the ordinance would work properly if carried out, arguing that the City Treasurer is alone responsible for the present state of affairs.

"Heretofore, upon the presentation of city warrants at the office of the City Treasurer, it shall be the duty of the City Treasurer to pay the same on demand and in the order of their presentation. And in the event of the inability of the City Treasurer to pay the same on their first presentation, he shall cause such warrants to be stamped with date of presentation and numbers, and he shall then announce to the holders the earliest probable time within which they shall be able to pay the same, and thereafter no new or unstamped warrants shall be cashed until all those stamped have been first paid, and those stamped shall be entitled to be first paid, and in the order of their numbers, the Treasurer making previous publication, by printed notice posted on the door of his office, of the time at which he will be able to commence the payment of stamped warrants."

"Provided, That the City Treasurer shall, however, in no case be allowed to stamp warrants when the funds in the Treasury are sufficient to meet the stamped warrants, as well as those presented and not stamped. Provided, further, That the City Treasurer shall not refuse to cash any stamped warrant in his regular order, and that the money for those previously stamped and not presented shall remain in the Treasury subject at all times to payment, and the interest on all such unstamped warrants shall cease when notice is given that the same shall be paid on presentation, as herein above provided."

A subsequent ordinance, approved October 9, 1868, provides for the publication of the notice in the daily papers, as well as its posting on the door of the Treasurer's office; and another supplementary ordinance brings the outstanding warrants of a date previous to 1868 under its operation.

As far as we can learn, the City Treasurer has complied with the letter and spirit of these ordinances in every detail, and we are unable to perceive how their oppressive operation is to be charged to anything except their provisions. At the last monthly settlement of the Treasurer's books, about \$500,000 were found to be available for the payment of warrants, and notice was accordingly made that those numbered from 1 to 4000, which approached that sum in amount, would be paid on presentation.

At the close of the present month a new adjustment of the books of the office will be made, and a new notice published, which may possibly run the figure up another thousand, but, as the law now stands, the hands of the Treasurer are tied, and he cannot divert any of the money required for the payment of stamped warrants below 4000 to the payment of any one presented subsequently. The only relief that is afforded to persons holding the city's obligations exists when the warrants are less than \$100 in amount, in which case their holders can sue out a writ of mandamus before an alderman, and recover the amount in five days. This relief is frequently sought, and large sums are paid out of the City Treasury every week, in defiance of Mr. Harper's ordinance. We hope that Councils will give the matter prompt and decisive attention next week, either repealing the ordinance referred to in toto, or so modifying them as to afford relief to the school teachers and others who are dependent upon their salaries from the city for support.

Gambling Stock-Jobbing Operations. The general public cares but little for the contents of the bulls and bears of the stock boards when they are conducted in the usual manner. The victims of adroit combinations receive but little sympathy for their defeat in the ordinary diamond-cut diamond encounters. When, however, audacious gamblers in stocks assail vital national interests, and embarrass the entire business community, for the purpose of promoting their nefarious schemes, they commit an act deserving condign punishment, and place themselves in a category of public criminals but little better than the poisoners of wells. New York journals state that a prominent stock operator of that city acknowledges that he contributed one million of dollars to the clique formed for the purpose of "locking up greenbacks," and the fact is established by abundant testimony that this clique borrowed and controlled, at the season when money is most in demand for the movement of crops, many millions of dollars, which they withdrew from circulation for the purpose of producing an artificial financial stringency. The immediate object they had in view was a reduction in the price of stocks; but they regarded with reckless and primal indifference the effect of their machinations upon the national revenue, the national securities, and the multifarious pecuniary transactions of the country. If Scro-

tary McCulloch had not wisely and promptly come to the rescue by his threat to purchase national bonds and to release Government certificates, this heartless combination would have inevitably caused the ruin of thousands of honest and enterprising men who are in no way connected with ordinary stock-jobbing transactions. If there is any mode by which the temporary success of similar schemes can be prevented hereafter, or if any new checks can be devised to prevent national banks from rendering them wilful assistance, Congress should not hesitate to apply a remedy for such a manifest evil. The effects of contractions and expansions of the currency upon all monetary transactions have been so frequently illustrated, that it is fearful to contemplate a contingency in which the power of materially reducing the circulating medium can be lodged in the hands of a small body of desperate and corrupt speculators.

Another marked feature of the New York stock speculation consists in the evidence afforded that great corporations are systematically managed in a manner designed to injure their credit and to diminish their revenues, so that bear stock operators may grow rich on the ruin of stockholders. If one-half of the allegations made under oath against the present and former managers of the Erie Railway are true, they are indifferent to the interests of the important public work committed to their charge, and mindful only of the opportunities to enrich themselves by squandering its revenues and by speculations based on the depreciation of its stock. This is a species of rascality only one degree less infamous than the scheme to create an artificial financial stringency, the main difference being that, while the latter results in the robbery of an entire community, the former robs only the members of a particular corporation. A large portion of the wealth of the country, however, is invested in public works of various kinds; and it would be a national calamity if any considerable number of American railways should fall under the control of dishonest managers.

The true object of stock boards is to facilitate the purchase and sale of stocks, bonds, and other securities. It is not possible, and perhaps not even desirable, that the wild rage for speculation which they sometimes encounter should be checked. But modes should certainly be devised for preventing stock-jobbers from making open war upon the financial interests of the nation, and from ruining the innocent stockholders of useful public works.

The Size and Wealth of Our City.

The annual report of the Board of Tax Revision was made yesterday to Councils, and published also in the Evening Telegraph, and contains many points of interest. It is of value as a record of the growth of Philadelphia, and as it is the official standard which governs all apportionments, we will look at some of the information it contains. The assessed value of the city is given according to the different wards, and of them, so far as real estate is concerned, the Sixth ward is the richest. Her real property is valued at \$43,516,401. The poorest is the Twenty-first, which owns but \$5,068,576. This difference is due not only to the size of the wards, but also to the greater increased value of property caused by improvement. The next item assessed is the amount of money out at interest. In this the Fifth ward exceeds all others, she having \$5,306,405 at interest, while the poorest ward is the Nineteenth, which has but \$40,823. In horse flesh the Twenty-second ward, Germantown and Chesnut Hill, greatly exceeds the others in the cost of her equipages. She has \$179,650. Next to her comes the Fifteenth ward, while the Eighth, which is reputed to be the wealthiest in Philadelphia, only has \$60,400. The excess of the Twenty-second can be explained by its being a region of magnificent distances, in which a carriage is essential to visiting. But why the Fifteenth keeps such a large excess we are at a loss to guess. In the Third ward there are but \$5000 worth of horses. In its furniture the Eighth ward exceeds but \$390,000 any other. Her household goods are valued at \$981,004. Next comes the Fifteenth, and the poorest is that stronghold of Democracy, the Seventeenth, which has its furniture valued at \$10,482. In carriages the same relative importance of the wards exists as in the case of horses, the Twenty-second leading off with \$99,215. In the Eleventh ward they return only \$590—which is just one carriage to about nineteen thousand population.

Having thus glanced at the wealth of the various portions of Philadelphia, let us see which of the political subdivisions has the most voters. The Twentieth ward takes the palm here. She has 10,103 taxables, and at the rate of seven inhabitants to one taxable—which is about the average—has a population of 70,000 souls. The smallest is the Twenty-eighth, with 1765. The Fourth ward has a total of 4101, which is hardly consistent with her late majority. The total is 137,490, which would make a population of about 900,000 souls in Philadelphia.

A curious little fact in regard to the number of watches owned in Philadelphia is worthy of notice. In all our city there are but 12,533 gold and 936 silver watches, if the returns are to be believed. In the Seventeenth ward, with a population of over 35,000, there are but 81 watches. The Fifteenth has the most, 1605; the Eighth comes next, with 1190. Such returns as these are a parody on justice, and make the assessment, so far as watches are concerned, become a mere farce. The report of the Board, however, shows an increase of both population and wealth which augurs well for the future greatness of our city.

The Woman Question.

There is one element of the woman question which is almost invariably overlooked by those who are perpetually making a noise about the grievances of the fair sex. As we remarked yesterday, nearly every woman

who is thrown upon her own resources for support, by reason of her not being incumbered with a husband, or by being deprived of the staff and comfort of her life by the hand of death, is totally unfitted for anything in the wide world except the needle. In consequence of this lamentable state of affairs, the needle market is overstocked, and insufficient wages are the inevitable result. If there were no more seamstresses than were necessary to make all the shirts that the masculine world can wear, the price of shirts would have an upward tendency, and so would women's wages. The remedy for this difficulty is the opening of new spheres of labor for the sex. Two things are necessary to accomplish this. The great, overgrown boys who lounge behind the counter must first be driven into the fields and the workshops, and then the women who are to take their places must be qualified for doing so. And not alone behind the counter, but in scores of places besides, is woman entitled to a firmer foothold than she now enjoys.

Yet in scarcely any kind of light labor for which our sisters and daughters are fitted by nature is the prevailing standard of education among them sufficiently high. A woman who knows nothing of geography is not fitted to be a telegraph operator; a woman who writes a slow scrawl is not fitted to be a book-keeper; a woman who cannot detect a counterfeit note, in spite of accumulated grease and dirt, is not fitted to dispose of calicoes and ribbons; a woman who, like the young man by whom a fatal mistake was made in this city a few days ago, does not know the difference between assafoetida and atropia, is not fitted to dispense life-giving and death-dealing drugs; a woman who, like old mother Wallace of coffee-pot fame, tortures two and two into seven, and three times six into a hundred and nineteen and a half, is not fitted for anything more ennobling or more profitable than the rocking of a cradle or the scouring of a door knob. Let the old grannies and the young ladies who are determined upon setting right all the wrongs which afflict the human race, keep these simple facts in mind while they are in conclave at the Hub, and they will prove themselves to be not such consummate fools as some people think they are, with a fair show of justice. Better still than that, they will be able to accomplish something towards securing for the laboring women of the country a just recompense for their toil, towards turning from the paths of vice tens of thousands of creatures as frail as they are fair, who must go to the dogs because they have no other alternative save starvation.

The National Christian Convention.

The National Christian Convention, composed of the ministers and laymen of all the Protestant denominations, concluded a session of three days at the Re-formed Dutch Church, New York, yesterday. The object of this Convention was to discuss questions relating to the welfare of the Church of Christ, to devise if possible some means for exciting a greater interest in religion, and to promote a unity of feeling and action among Christians of all denominations. Of course, the decisions of this body will have no binding force on any of the denominations represented, and indeed the idea was rather to promote a Christian unity among the members of the different evangelical denominations, and to arouse them to a concerted action on those matters that they are all agreed upon, rather than to argue about the technical differences that separate the sects.

Some of the questions debated were of the highest importance, and it is to be hoped that the result of this conference will be that churches of all denominations will be induced to consider them with a view of correcting evils in church management that undoubtedly exist.

The system of renting pews was warmly debated, and by a number of the speakers denounced as tending to drive the poor away from the churches. This is one of the knotty questions for which it is difficult to find a satisfactory solution. Free churches, where they have been established, have only been partially successful, and the renting of pews seems to be almost the only means by which the necessary revenue for supporting ministers and paying necessary expenses can be certainly secured. At the same time this arrangement undoubtedly has the effect of closing the door of many of our churches not only in the faces of the poor but to all strangers, and it is worthy of the consideration of ministers, as well as laymen, whether some means cannot be devised whereby our churches can be thrown open and all comers be made to feel that they are heartily welcome.

The Convention did not arrive at any conclusion on this subject, but an interchange of experiences and opinions was had, and the result may be that sufficient interest will be excited among the different denominations to bring about a much needed reform.

We think that conferences of this kind are calculated to do good. Whether a union of all the Protestant denominations is possible, or whether such a union would be advantageous, are matters of serious doubt, but there are many things of the utmost importance for the promotion of the cause of Christianity in which the different sects might co-operate with advantage.

Chromo-Lithographs.

Within a very few years past chromo lithographs have become extensively popular, and, good, bad, and indifferent, they have figured in the print shop windows and have found their way into thousands of homes. There are few persons who have no taste whatever for art, or who do not care to have pictures of some sort hung upon the walls of their homes, even if they only consider them in the light of furniture and as available to fill up vacant spaces and as adding to the general attractions of apartments, without any particular regard to their subjects or their general merits as works

of art. Chromos have, as we think, been sneered at and unjustly disparaged by some professional critics, apparently for no other reason than that they are cheap and popular; and, on the other hand, they have been too extravagantly praised by persons who have not sufficient art culture to give intelligent opinions with regard to their real merits and deficiencies. Some of the manufacturers of chromos, too, have laid themselves open to just censure by ill-advised attempts to imitate the handling and texture of oil paintings, and thus destroying their genuine characteristics. We think that chromo lithographs are entitled to be judged on their own merits, and we believe that they are better calculated to awaken an enthusiasm and cultivate a taste for art than any style of picture that has yet been produced, and on this account, if no other, they are entitled to the consideration of art critics. There are comparatively few persons who can afford to purchase original paintings, or who have sufficient judgment and taste to make the best selections, even if they have the money. It would be better if those who have the means would always purchase original works, and this support and encourage our hard-working artists, but a good chromo is of more real value than a poor painting, and it will do more towards cultivating a correct taste for art. Prang, of Boston, has published a number of excellent works although he has not yet succeeded in equalling the best European chromos. He has made, and is making, decided improvements, however, and he is ambitious to make his productions worthy of the highest commendation. If Mr. Prang would do away with his embossing press, and not attempt to make his chromos anything but chromos, he will disarm much of the censure that has been directed against him, and will be much more likely to succeed in the objects of his ambition.

Other American chromo publishers have produced creditable works, and a little picture entitled "God's Acre," after Miss E. Osborn, by Falconer, Gurney & Son, No. 707 Broadway, New York, which has recently been issued, is a simple and touching little picture. Two children, with an umbrella over them as a protection against the drenching snow and sleet, are passing through a graveyard. The coloring is subdued, and the various details well rendered. This picture is designed to illustrate Longfellow's well known poem:—

I like that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls the burial ground "God's Acre": it is just; it consecrates each grave within its walls, and breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust. God's Acre! Yes, that blessed name imparts comfort to those who in the grave have sought the seat that they had garnered in their hearts. Their bread of life, alas! no more their own. Into its furrows shall we all be cast, In the first ground that the second burying A, the great harvest, when the archangel's blast Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain. Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom, In the first ground that the second burying. And each bright bios on mingle its perfume With that of flowers which never bloomed on earth. With thy rude ploughshare, Death, turn up the soil, And spread the furrow for the sowed we sow; This is the field and Acre of our God! This is the place where human harvests grow!

THE INDIAN'S SUMMER RIG.

MEDICINE WOLF was a prominent medical gentleman, at the head of his profession among the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians. He had studied practical anatomy to some purpose. All the summer he had worn "Indian Summer."

At the close of the Indian Summer was his necktie, which was made out of forty scalps. Some of the scalps were from grey-headed Indian gentlemen and some were from little Indian boys. He didn't live under the shadow of ROCK HILL & WILSON'S immense BROWN CLOTHING STORE and so he didn't know any better.

Lo! the poor Indian! It was a poor way he had of fixing himself up. Now that the Indian Summer of our discontent has given way to the frosty frigidities of November, let all of us who live within the bounds of civilization admire the gorgeous opportunities afforded to us, not only to keep on our heads the scalps which nature has deposited on us, but to supplement nature's provisions by full suits of the elegant costumes which ROCK HILL & WILSON so liberally provide alike for the ripe old age and jolly juvenility. Hurrah for the clothes of

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